

FACE Program Fact Sheet

Fatality Assessment and Control Evaluation

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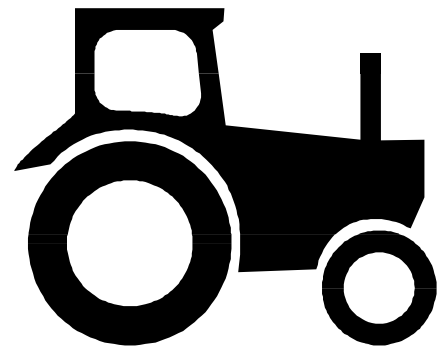
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THREE FARMERS RUN OVER AND KILLED WHEN THEY START ENGINES WHILE STANDING NEXT TO THE TRACTOR

BACKGROUND

The Wisconsin Fatality Assessment and Control Evaluation (FACE) Program received reports of 106 fatal occupational injuries during 1998. Tractor-related incidents accounted for nine (8%) of the total fatal injuries. Three of those occurred when farmers were run over while starting the tractors without being in the driver's seat.

This fact sheet describes those incidents and requests that farm safety professionals and employers who use agricultural equipment bring the following recommendations to the attention of tractor drivers and their families.



THE INCIDENTS

Incident #1

A farmer completed some repairs on a tractor carburetor. The tractor was turned off, but apparently left in second gear. The farmer was unable to climb into the operator's seat due to chronic knee pain, so he stood next to the tractor in front of the left rear tire, and turned the ignition key to start the tractor. The tractor lurched forward and knocked the victim face down to the ground, then pushed and pinned him as it moved forward. It stopped with the left rear wheel resting on his chest. He was found by a feed company deliveryman.

Incident #2

A farmer was repairing a corn planter hitched to a tractor. The tractor was turned off, but apparently left in gear. After completing some repairs, he stood in front of the left rear tire, and used a screwdriver to cross the solenoid terminals to start the tractor. The tractor lurched forward and knocked the victim to the ground, then moved forward. The farmer was struck by the steel discs on the front of the planter and dragged until the tractor stopped. A hired hand found the farmer under the planter.

Incident #3

A farmer was repairing his tractor while it was turned off, in gear. The farmer was unable to climb into the operator's seat due to degenerative hip disease. He started the engine while standing alongside the tractor. The tractor lurched forward, knocked him down, and ran over his legs. His son found him within 15 minutes of the incident.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To prevent similar occurrences, tractor drivers should:

- **sit in the operator's seat while starting a tractor.**
- **place the transmission in neutral or park, set the brakes, and follow the manufacturer's starting procedure.**

In addition, tractor drivers who have difficulty getting on a tractor should:

- **contact the county extension office to locate organizations and agencies that help farmers with conditions that limit their mobility.**

The Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services, in agreement with the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) conducts research on occupational fatalities. The Fatality Assessment and Control Evaluation (FACE) Program focuses on identifying factors that increase the risk of work-related fatal injuries. The Wisconsin FACE Program helps in the development and use of improved safety measures for preventing fatal work injuries.

PLEASE POST

FACE information is produced and distributed to provide current, relevant education on methods to prevent severe work-related injuries.

If you have comments or questions, please call the FACE Project at 608/266-7298, or write:

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